

Shoreline Environment Designations

Shoreline environment designations are analogous to zoning classifications or districts for areas under the shoreline jurisdiction. The purpose of the shoreline designations is to encourage uses that will protect or enhance the current or desired character of a shoreline.

King County's current Shoreline Master Program uses four environment designations – natural, conservancy, rural, and urban. The Washington State Department of Ecology's 2003 guidelines recommend six designations. However, a county or city may establish a different designation system or may retain its current environment designations, as long as it is consistent with the purposes and policies of the guidelines. The policies and regulations for each designation should reflect the purpose and intent of each environment and reflect its specific conditions.

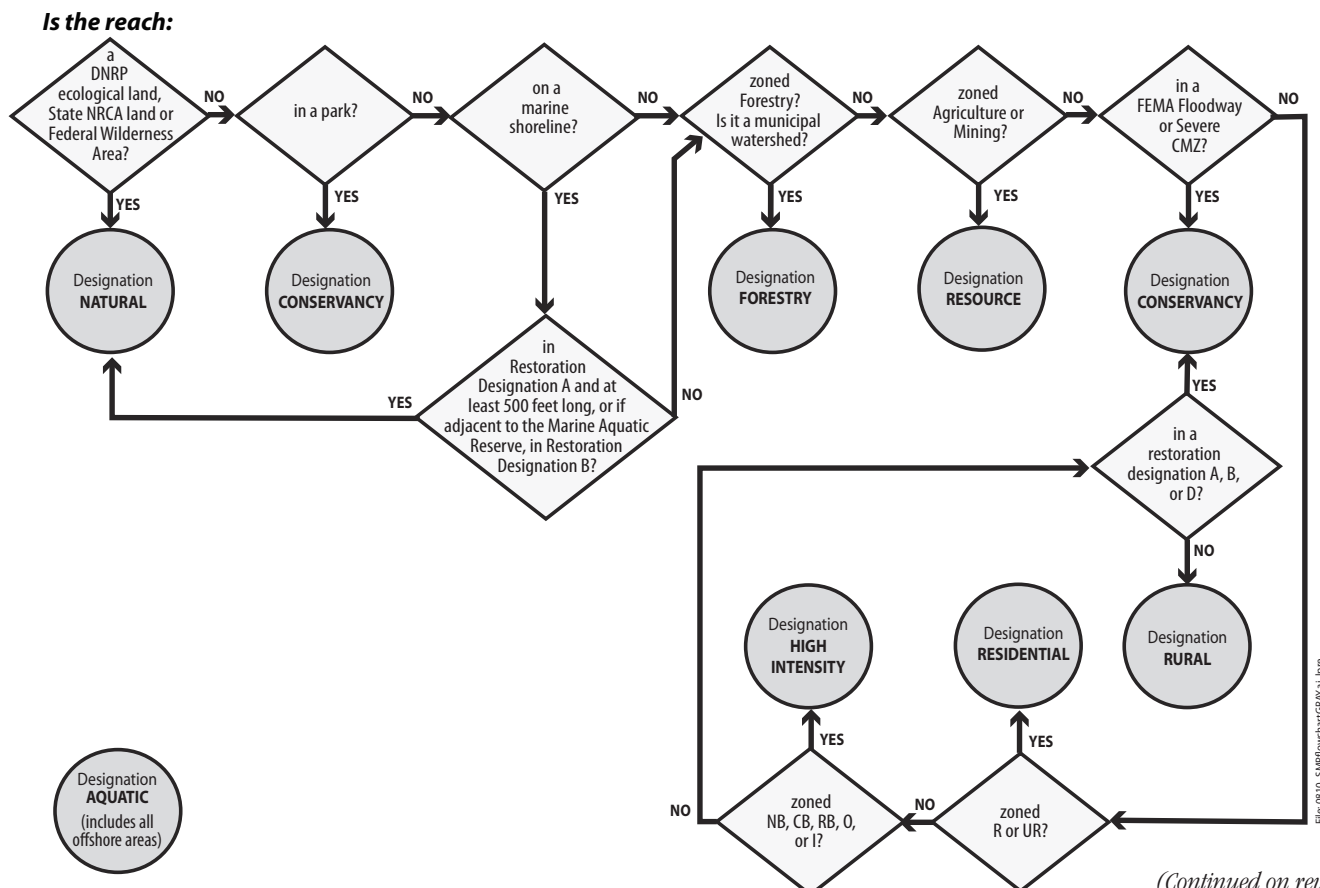
King County is considering adopting eight shoreline environment designations. King County reviewed Ecology's recom-

mended shoreline designations, but is proposing changes to be more consistent with its Comprehensive Plan (the guiding policy document for all land use and development regulations in unincorporated King County).

The current draft (October 2008) of King County's Shoreline Master Program establishes the preliminary designations for the shoreline jurisdiction based on the physical, biological and development characteristics of the shorelines. After public review, King County will establish formal boundaries for each environment designation. This draft (October 2008) also includes proposed policies and regulations (Chapter 5, Shoreline Management, of the King County Comprehensive Plan) to each of the shoreline environments. These policies and regulations will apply to all uses allowed with the environment.

This flow chart shows the factors King County used to determine what shoreline environment designation to apply to any given shoreline reach. Maps of the results of this decision making process can be found at your.kingcounty.gov/shorelines.

Flowchart for Shoreline Environment Designations



(Continued on reverse side)

DESIGNATIONS

The following table compares King County's current shoreline environments with those it is proposing in this update.

Shoreline Designations	
Current Shoreline Program	Draft Shoreline Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban: The purpose of designating the urban environment is to ensure optimum use of the shorelines within urbanized areas by permitting intensive use and by managing development so that it enhances and maintains the shorelines of the state for a multiplicity of urban uses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Intensity Shoreline: Applied to areas that provide high-intensity water-oriented commercial, transportation, and industrial uses. • Residential Shoreline: Applied to accommodate residential uses at urban densities, while allowing for non-residential uses that are consistent with the protection of shoreline.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural: The purpose of designating the rural environment is to restrict intensive development, function as a buffer between urban areas, and maintain open spaces and opportunities for recreational uses, within the ecological carrying capacity of the land and water resource. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Shoreline: Applied to accommodate rural residential shoreline development, while allowing for rural non-residential uses that are consistent with the protection of the shoreline.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservancy: Conservancy areas are intended to maintain their existing character. This designation is designed to protect, conserve, and manage existing natural resources and valuable historic and cultural areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservancy Shoreline: Applied to protect and conserve the shoreline for ecological, public safety, recreation, agriculture, and mineral resource purposes. Includes areas with important ecological processes and functions, valuable historic and cultural features, flood and geological hazards, agricultural and mineral resource lands, and recreational opportunities. • Resource Shoreline: Applied to conserve the shoreline for agriculture and mineral resource use.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural: The purpose of designating the natural environment is to preserve and restore those natural resource systems existing relatively free of human influence. These systems require severe restrictions of intensities and types of uses permitted so as to maintain the integrity of the natural environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry Shoreline: Applied in areas to allow for forestry and protect municipal water supplies. • Natural Shoreline: Applied to shorelines that are relatively intact or have minimally degraded shoreline functions that are intolerant of human use.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Shoreline: Applied to the areas waterward of the ordinary high water mark.